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Wickersham - Is It "Mt. Tacoma" or "Rainier"?



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PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
TACOMA ACADEMY OF SCIENCE,
FEBRUARY 6, 1893.

*From the Steward's
office*

Mar. 13,



Paper by Hon. James Wickersham.

Is it "Mt. Tacoma" or "Rainier."

What Do History and Tradition Say?



TACOMA:
PUGET SOUND PRINTING COMPANY,
1893.

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Is it "Mt. Tacoma" or "Rainier?"

WHAT DO HISTORY AND TRADITION SAY ?

ORAL TESTIMONY.

This subject was discussed last evening at a most interesting meeting of the Academy of Science. The meeting took place in the assembly hall of the Annie Wright Seminary. There were about 120 persons present, notwithstanding the very stormy weather. Among those present were a number of old settlers and leading citizens, including General A. V. Kautz, Lieutenant Van Ogle, Dr. C. P. Culver, Editor E. N. Fuller, Dr. A. E. Burns, Walter J. Thompson, Fred G. Plummer, Judge Allyn, Judge James Wickersham, W. Curtis Taylor, M. S. Hill, Rev. I. H. Hallock, Professor R. S. Bingham, Prof. A. A. Bartow and George P. Eaton. There were also present the following Indians of the Puyallup, Nesqually and Klickitat tribes: George Leschi, a son of Quiemuth, a leader in the Indian war of 1855; Jack Simmons, John Hiaton, one of the patriarchs of the reservation, and a signer of the treaty of 1854; Mrs. John Hiaton and John Powers. They were all neatly clothed, the men's costumes being faultless down to the matter of cravats.

Judge Allyn, president of the Academy, occupied the chair, and the Indians sat in a row alongside of him. The regular business was dispensed with. Judge Wickersham's paper, as given herewith, was then read, after which the judge was asked to sit on the platform to conduct the conversation with the Indians.

General Kautz was first called upon for an address. He ascended the mountain twenty-five years ago, and later found the name to be, in the Indian tongue, "Tahoma," or "Tacobet." He said that Tacoma would be the best name for the mountain, but he feared a rivalry with Seattle. Rivalries of this kind were not profitable, as witness the senatorial contest at Olympia. [Laughter.] Lieutenant Van Ogle said:

GENTLEMEN: I have not much to say about it. From what I used to learn from the Indians, the name is "Tahoma." One of the chiefs that used to try to teach me Chinook in the early days told me the mountain's name was "Tacobet."

Then came the most interesting part of the proceedings, the talks of the Indians. The younger men all talked fairly good English. The old man Hiaton, who is over 80 years of age, spoke with a good deal of native dignity and deliberateness. His words were translated by George Leschi.

He would speak a few words, gesticulating quite freely, and then pause for the interpreter to proceed. Jack Simmon's said:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I can't talk to you very much. Always was this mountain here (pointing) called "Tacobet." I think Tacoma is the closest name that white men call. All the La Conner Indians and all over the Sound give you his name "Tacobet."

John Powers rose up and spoke next. Said he:

GENTLEMEN: My mother was an Indian and my father a white man. The only name the mountain is called by Indians is "Tacobet"—"Tacobet," that all the name it called.

George Leschi said:

Well, my good friends, I can't talk much, but the name of the mountain is "Tacobet," and the Klickitats call it "Tahoma." I am about three-quarters Klickitat.

The old man, John Hiaton, was then called upon, and was interpreted by Leschi. He first looked all around, and with a dignified gesture, said:

I see all the ladies and gentlemen. I am going to call the name of the mountain—the name God gave it. God put me down here before you came here. He put me here for seed—perhaps he sent you here. My people call mountain "Tacobet"—George, his name (pointing to George); "Tacobet" mountain's name—nobody can change—that is all.

IS IT "TACOMA" OR "MOUNT RAINIER"?

Judge Wickersham's paper was as follows:

The recent action of President Harrison in reserving from disposal under the public land laws a tract of more than 200,000 acres surrounding Tacoma, the royal mountain peak, is of great interest to the people of Pierce county and the city of Tacoma. It is expected, of course, that this city will be the point to which all tourists will hereafter come on their way to examine the stupendous glaciers of this most lordly of American mountains, and it is, consequently, of great interest to our people to see to it that everything concerning this proposed park be well done—honestly, fairly and patriotically. It is the most famous mountain peak in our country; celebrated the globe over for its simple grandeur, and it behooves our people to protect it, and the park around it, jealously and with sleepless vigilance.

Little can be done now, but that little is of vast importance. A proper and fitting name for this great cone, and the park around it, must be officially announced. When this official announcement is once made it will be impossible to change it. It will be used in song and story; in tradition and history; poets, authors, tourists, newspapers and the scientific bodies of the world will adopt it, and it will never change.

What name shall be forever perpetuated by being thus officially attached to this mountain peak? Shall it be called "Mount Rainier" or "Tacoma?" Has it a name, and if so, what is it? Has it more than one, and if so, which has the better right to be officially adopted and preserved? What are the facts? What do honesty, euphony, simplicity, poetry, tradition, history and patriotism require of us? Let us view the facts, try the cause, hear the evidence, and then decide.

In the preparation of this article no attention has been paid to literary effect; the only effort has been to obtain facts by the best method possible

in such a case as this—by letters from prominent people who understand the facts, know our history, and talk the language of the Indians; by certificates signed by old Indians, who, of course, know the truth, and by an appeal to records, papers, books and all honest sources of information. The writer has, during the last year, written the Puyallup-Nesqually Indian language, and has also preserved many of their myths, traditions and stories concerning this (to them) great, mysterious mountain. A special effort has been made to get a correct Indian nomenclature of this region, and to no name has so much attention been paid as to the Indian name for this lordly mountain, from the perpetual glaciers of which spring the waters of the White, Carbon, Puyallup, Nesqually, Des Chutes, Chehalis and Cowlitz rivers.

SPANISH DISCOVERIES.

More than a century ago, in 1774, the Spaniards saw the Olympic mountains and named Olympus, Sierra de Santa Rosalia. In 1790 they explored the hitherto fabulous straits of Anian, and entered a land-locked bay which they named Port Quadra. From Port Quadra they explored the waters of the great roadstead to the southeast, which they named Canal de Caamano. Rosario Straits, Galiano Island, Fidalgo Island, Caamano Island, and many other names are preserved by reason of these first explorers furnishing Vancouver with their maps and charts in 1792, when he visited the same waters. The Spaniards explored the exact spot in 1790, from which Vancouver named "Mount Rainier" in 1792. They lived for weeks in daily sight of Mount Baker, a name bestowed by Vancouver, because a member of his crew by that name was the first one of his expedition to see it. Did the Spaniards name "Mount Tacoma," and if so, what name did they give it? They saw it two years before Vancouver did, and his was not a discovery, but at best only a naming.

ENGLISH DISCOVERIES.

In May, 1792, Vancouver entered the Straits of de Fuca and cast anchor in Discovery Bay, the Port Quadra of the Spaniards. Leaving his vessels here to repair, he explored what we now call Admiralty Inlet and Puget Sound in small boats. As the little fleet rounded the long sand point and coasted down into Port Townsend Bay, Vancouver records that a "very remarkable high, round mountain, covered with snow, apparently at the southern extremity of the distant range of snowy mountains before noticed, bore S. 45 E." Later on, while in the Canal de Caamano, of the Spaniards, in speaking of the range of mountains now known as the Cascades, he says: "At its northern extremity, Mount Baker bore by compass N. 22 E.; the round, snowy mountain, now forming its southern extremity, and which, after my friend, Rear Admiral Rainier, I distinguished by the name of "Mount Rainier;" bore N. 42 E."

And thus, at a distance of over one hundred miles, Vancouver named this grand white-capped summit after a foreigner who represented nothing to our American civilization, and who not only never saw the mountain bearing his name, but who never saw the continent upon which it is so conspicuous a land mark. Vancouver held no communication with the Indians, and seemed to have had the greatest contempt for them, and made

no effort to ascertain the names, if any they had, for the rivers, mountains, bays, and other natural features of this virgin world.

At every turn he fastened the name of an obscure friend (whose only claim to this high honor was an acquaintance with Vancouver) to some prominent feature in the Puget Sound landscape. Out of this medley the name of Rainier was thus bestowed by him on the most perfect cone in that long line of extinct volcanoes, standing cold and lifeless, in the great Continental range. Vancouver explored and named Puget Sound after his lieutenant, Peter Puget, and then sailed away to Nootka, never again to see the points upon which he so recklessly flung the names of his unknown friends; and this is the history of the name of "Mount Rainier."

THE AMERICAN NAME.

Is "Tacoma" the American name for this mountain, and what does the word mean? Should "Tacoma" be perpetuated and "Rainier" abandoned? Is the one as honestly entitled to recognition as the other? Let the following eminent authorities answer the question.

VANCOUVER, WASH., April 3, 1892.

"Hon. James Wickersham, Tacoma, Wash.

"DEAR SIR: Some time ago I received a note from you asking me to say where the word 'Tacoma' came from. The word belongs to the Scadgit Indian language, and means plenty of food or nourishment; and hence, a woman who had plenty of nourishment in her breasts was called 'Tacoma sladah,' or the 'motherly woman,' and in the course of time the nourishing breast of a woman was called 'Tacoma,' because it furnished plenty of food for the young, and the snow-capped mountain were called 'Haik-Tacomas,' because they resembled a woman's breasts, and were supposed to furnish plenty of nourishment to the lesser mountains. Haik 'Tacomas,' the great mother of mountains.

"Tacoma,' the Indian town, was so-called from the fact that plenty of natural food was easily obtained at that place, the mother of towns.

"The first author that I remember using the word was Theodore Winthrop; he called the snow peaks 'Tacomas.'

I am most respectfully yours,

"B. F. SHAW."

Colonel Shaw was the interpreter at the Nesqually treaty of 1854, and commanded the Washington Volunteers in the war that followed. He is one of the most competent Indian scholars in the Northwest, and his statement is entitled to great weight. He is now a member of the state senate.

"PORT TOWNSEND,

"JEFFERSON COUNTY,

"STATE OF WASHINGTON.

"February 3, 1892. }

"Hon. James Wickersham, Tacoma, Wash.

"DEAR SIR: Your letter of the 1st inquiring about the origin and meaning of the word 'Tacoma' was received this morning. It seems to be

impossible for the average white man either to pronounce the Indian word correctly. 'Tacoma' is the white man's rendering of the Nesqually and Puyallup word 'Ta-ho-ma' or 'Tah-o-mah,' accent on the first syllable. The word means snow mountain. The Clallam name for Mount Baker is 'P'kowitz' 'Kowitz' mountain. The Indian is thoroughly practical talk. He calls things by their right names without any attempt at poetic imagery. White poets make up their fancy names and descriptions. There are Indian orators who use ornate and poetic language like white orators and poets, but the rank and file of the Indian men and women express themselves in very plain, common talk.

"In the *Californian Illustrated Magazine* No. 2, Vol. 1, January, 1892, is an interesting article by Charles Lummis, entitled, 'The City of the Sky; Acoma.' The foot note says this is pronounced 'Ah-co-mah,' accent on the first syllable. This is a strange stone island 7000 feet above the level of the sea. Upon the bare table top of this strange island, in the desert, stands a town of matchless interest, the home of half a thousand quaint lives and of half a thousand years romance. This 'City of the Sky' is in the western half of New Mexico, thirteen miles south of the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad. My attention was called to it from the similarity of names—'Ah-co-mah,' the 'City of the Sky,' and 'Tah-co-mah,' the 'snow-covered mountains.'

"Both words, though of different languages, indicate something high up. I do not know that there is any affinity in the languages—the Nesqually, or Puyallup, and the Zuni, but there is an interesting coincidence.

"The late Dr. Wm. Fraser Tolmie, who was stationed at Nesqually as trader for the Hudson Bay Company, in early times, gave great attention to the study of Indian languages, and is considered an authority. He always told me that the word 'Ta-ho-mah' means a white, snow-covered mountain.

"The Indian word 'Quil-ley-hute' is by the white man spelled and pronounced 'quilleute,' and so of almost every Indian word, and especially the names of places. When a person can neither pronounce nor spell one Indian word correctly, their florid descriptions of the meaning should be taken *cum grano salis*.

"Very cordially yours,

"JAMES G. SWAN."

Judge Swan has a reputation second to none on our coast as an ethnologist—his life-long study of our Indians, his labors for the Smithsonian Institution and his many interesting articles on the Indians of this coast have given him great weight as an authority.

The *Tacoma Morning Globe*, of Sunday, August 3, 1890, contains a very interesting article by John Flett, recently deceased, about the name of the mountain. No one is more competent than Mr. Flett, who came to Puget Sound in 1841, and the following is his language:

"It was no novelty to me to hear the conference between a number of 'Indians and Hon. Elwood Evans, which occurred in June, 1882, at his law office in New Tacoma, on Pacific Avenue, in the second story of S. M.

"Nolan's store. That gentleman requested me (I was then employed at the Puyallup Indian reservation) to invite several old reliable Indians to visit him and give him information as to the name among the Indians of the mountain called by the whites 'Mount Rainier.' Before that time, and in fact at the time I first came to the Puget Sound country (1841), I had heard the Indians from the east side of the mountains (the Klickitats) call it 'Ta-ho-ma. I interpreted for Mr. Evans. He put his questions in English or Chinook jargon. The questions, or his words, were put in native Indian to the old men. The old Indians, in reply to me, said that the name Tahoma applied by them to that mountain, meant a woman's breast or 'pap,' that feeds 'tootoosh' or milk; that the 'earth was their mother, for she had fed them, and Tahoma given them drink, and overflowed and made the grass grow rich from the white water that flowed from her.' I, at the time, translated their guttural expressions, which resulted in aggregating the word 'Tahoma,' though really no two Indians pronounced the word exactly alike."

The following is the result of that interview, as given by Judge Evans in his Fourth of July address at Puyallup that year:

"This grand lesson stamped its impress upon the native mind—inspired the Indians' imagination. It originated for this Colossus among mountains the poetic name of Tak-homa, with a meaning full of poetic significance. Literally translated, 'a woman's breast that feeds.' How aptly is expressed that conical pile of eternal snow, which by the genial heat from heaven's own luminary sends down the waters which feed and enrich so vast a region! How true that thought, how happy that idea, for out of those secret urns in the deep recesses of old Rainier proceed those numerous rivers which fertilize the rich valleys of the Puget Sound basin and the valleys of the Yakima!"

OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON, Feb. 8, 1892.

"Hon. James Wickersham, Tacoma, Wash.

"DEAR SIR: Your esteemed favor is at hand asking for information in regard to the origin of the word Tacoma. I do not think I can enlighten you on the subject. I was at one time superintendent of Indian affairs for the Territory of Washington, and made some effort to get the meaning and origin of Indian words. I think the present word 'Tacoma' is a corruption of the Indian word 'Tacopa,' or 'Ta-co-pe,' which in Indian means white—'Ta-co-pa Illi-he,' or white land. This name, I think, was pretty generally given the mountains by the Indians, particularly by the Nesquallies, Puyallups, Muckleshoots and Squaksons.

"Very truly,

"J. T. McKENNEY."

Some time ago *Every Sunday* contained a short article on "Tacoma," from which the following is extracted:

"C. P. Ferry (the duke of Tacoma) has not only been a resident of Commencement Bay as long as any other resident, but as an apt scholar he

is doubtless more familiar than anyone else with mountain nomenclature and fiction legends. On returning from Europe, he was interviewed by a *Globe* reporter, and said, among other things, that about the first thing he heard when he landed was that Seattle is still kicking about the name of Mount Tacoma, and that made him tired. 'Why,' said he, 'I thought that controversy was dead long ago. It is preposterous, the idea of calling that mountain by any other name than Tacoma. The idea that we named the mountain after the city is preposterous. Where do they think we got the name of Tacoma from for the city? We didn't invent it. Where had we ever heard it? Why, it was the name of the mountain, and we named the city after the mountain. I named this city and I named it after the mountain. Where did the mountain get the name? Why, the Indians always called it by that name, Ta-ho-ma. When this city had its beginning, all about here was primeval forests; Indians dwelt along this shore and on the shore across Commencement Bay. They all called the mountain Ta-ho-ma. We learned the name from the Indians; that's all there is about it. The name we gave the city was the nearest expression that English orthography could give to the Indian guttural name Ta-ho-ma. Why, when General McCarver, my father-in-law, laid out the first townsite over in Old Town, he came down to Portland with the plans to draft the papers. He proposed to call it 'Commencement City,' after the bay. I said at once that that would never do. The name was not pretty, and it was too big and ungainly; besides, it would open the way to ridicule—just think of naming a town Commencement City! Tahoma, the name of the mountain, popped into my head, and we changed the name to Tacoma. That was the way it was. This city was named in Portland, and it was named after the mountain. And Tahoma is the name of the mountain."

OLYMPIA, WASH., Feb. 11, 1892.

"Hon. James Wickersham, Tacoma, Wash.

"DEAR SIR: In reply to yours of the 1st inst., asking for such information as I can give concerning the origin and meaning of the word Tacoma: Without particularly referring to your several questions, I will say that I have, during my long residence on the Sound, talked with many people, both Indians and whites, who, from their opportunities, would be likely to know something of the matter, and that from all the information I have been able to gather, I am of the opinion that the word "Tacoma" is of Indian origin, and that the most extended meaning that can be given to it is 'white mountain.'"

"I say the 'most extended meaning' for the reason that I have talked with intelligent Indians, who assert that 'Tacoma' (they generally pronounce it Ta-ho-ma) simply means 'mountain,' and that it applies to any mountain, whether it has snow on it or not. I think, however, that 'white mountain' is the true meaning of the word, for the reasons hereinafter mentioned:

"I conclude that the word is of Indian origin from the fact that the Indians generally, not only upon the Sound, but east of the Cascades, so far

as I am informed, recognize it as such, and as the name of 'Mount Rainier,' so-called. And second, because I know of no claim from any quarter that the word, or any word resembling it in sound, of other than Indian origin, was ever applied as the name for that or any other mountain.

"I conclude that the meaning of the word is white mountain. First, because the very best authorities—that is, those who have the best means of informing themselves upon the subject, say that the word means 'white mountain.' And secondly, because Tacoma is pre-eminently a white mountain, and that therefore that is the name which the Indians living within its sight would naturally give it, and the only one which other tribes of Indians would accept, it being purely descriptive.

"As I have already remarked, the Indians generally, on both sides of the mountains, recognize 'Tacoma' as the name of this particular peak, and it strikes me that they do so because this word is strikingly descriptive of it.

"As Tacoma has been accepted and used as the name of the mountain in question by various tribes of Indians for an indefinite number of years, I, at least, have found it impracticable to determine what tribe used it first. It occurs to me, however, which is mere matter of conjecture, that places and things generally first receive their names from those who live upon or near them, as probable that the name 'Tacoma' originated with the people living on the Nesqually at the foot of, and in constant view, of said mountain, and that such name was naturally accepted and adopted by other tribes in speaking of the people living at the foot of Mount Tacoma and their country, until it became general, as seems to have been the case with the Indians, as I have pointed out in this matter.

"What generations have come and gone since this mountain was named Tacoma or Tahoma, is, I think, beyond successful human investigation.

"Regretting that I cannot give you more satisfactory information on the subject,

"I am, yours truly,

"FRANCIS HENRY."

In the *American Anthropologist* for January, 1892, is an article on "Aboriginal Geographic Names," by Rev. Myron Eells, of the Skokomish Reservation, a high authority on such matters. Mr. Eells says: "Mr. M. W. Walker, who has lived much among the Indians on the east side of the Cascade mountains, is confident that the word originated among some of those Indians, probably the Tahamas, was originally Tah-ho-ma, and meant 'the gods.'

"In southern Oregon is a tribe of Indians named the 'Acho-mawi,' and Powers, in "Contributions to *North American Ethnology*," gives the derivation of this name from 'A-cho-ma,' a river. 'Acoma—the City of the Sky,' is an ancient pueblo in New Mexico. Its unique position on the summit of a table mountain, many hundred feet high, its inaccessibility, history, age, air of mystery and ancient civilization, give it an interest second to none in our country, but to us it is of peculiar interest, on account of the name, which is pronounced 'Ah-co-mah.'"

Not long since the following clipping was published in the Tacoma⁸ Daily Ledger, speaking of the onyx quarries of the State of Pueblo, Mexico:

"Since the Mexican Central Railroad from Pueblo to Tecomavaca was opened, no less than 1000 tons of onyx have passed over it." Due west from the City of Mexico, in the State of Colima, is the city of "Tecoman," which has the exact pronunciation given by Mr. Peter Stanup to one of his forms of the Indian name of the mountain.

The Pima Indians of Arizona call the Gila river "Ack'-omah," while the first known Indian chief at Nootka, Maquina, called his head wife "Arcomah," or the queen, a general name for her title. In volume 6, *North American Sylva*, Nuttall, page 74, is a description of the trumpet flower, "Tecoma Radicans," with a foot note by the author, which reads that the name is "from Tecomaxochitl, the aboriginal Mexican name of one of the species."

One of the principal tribes of the Coahuiltican family of northern Mexico and southern Texas is the "Tecame," the pronunciation of which differs but little from our word Tacoma. In the Seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, under the title of the Copelan Family, a reference is made to the sub-tribe "My-acoma," situated in northern California.

In the "*Mountains of Oregon*," by W. G. Steele, of the Oregon Alpine Club, at page 55, is an interesting letter from Edwin Eells, United States Indian Agent for the Puyallup and Consolidated Agencies, dated December 8, 1886, in which Mr. Eells says: "The Indian word 'Ta-ko-bet' or Take-man, the first being the most general pronunciation used among the Indians, but both words are used, being the different pronunciation used by the dialects. It means a white mountain, and is a general name for any high, snow-covered or white treeless peak. It is applied to this mountain by the Indians of this vicinity, because it is the only or most prominent one of this kind in the vicinity. They use the word as we would speak of 'the white mountain,' there being but one near us. In the Skadget language the word is a little different, and is there called Ko-ma, and is applied by these Indians to Mount Baker, it being the mountain in that vicinity of the kind. The word squatach, or squat-letsh, is the general name for a range of mountains, while Ta-ko-bet or Ta-ko-man or Ko-ma, is the name of the snow-covered or white peaks in the range."

P. B. Van Trump, of Yelm, the most indefatigable mountaineer in Washington, whose accomplishments drew from Hon. Elwood Evans the expression of "that splendid scholar and writer, P. B. Van Trump, Esq.," is quoted in the *American Anthropologist*, of January, 1892, in Rev. Myron Eells' article on "Aboriginal Geographic Names," as follows:

"The first Indian I heard pronounce the name of the mountain was old Sluis-kin, who guided General Stevens and myself to the snow line when we made the first ascent to the summit in 1870. Sluis-kin's pronunciation, as near as I can represent it by letters, was Tah-ho-mah, and in his rendering of it there was, besides its music, an accent of awe and reverence, for Sluis-

kin was very imaginative and superstitious about Tahoma, believing that its hoary summit was the abode of a powerful spirit, who was the author of its eruptions and avalanches, and who would visit dire vengeance on any mortal who would dare to invade (if that were possible) his dread abode. When Stevens and I were encamped at the foot of the snow line we would often be awakened by the thunder of falling rocks or the deep thud of some avalanche. At such times Sluiskin would start from his blanket and repeat a dismal, dirge-like song as though he would appease the mountain spirit. Mishell Henry, another old Indian guide to the two-named mountain, prides himself in giving its true name. He has several times drilled me in pronouncing it, always smiling gravely and dignified at my ineffectual attempts to give his deep chest notes. Henry was the first to mark out the present route to the snow line, and even ascend it for two miles without leaving the saddle. He guided our party (the Bayley party) in 1883, and himself ascended to the 8000-foot level. Beyond that nothing could tempt him, for beyond, in his view, lay danger, folly, rashness; for even Henry, who is intelligent, and much more of a philosopher than the rest of his tribe (the Klickitats), associates the sublime summit of Tahoma with awe, danger and mystery. Your correspondent gives the meaning of 'Tacoma' as 'the mountain.' It is an interesting interpretation, considering the pre-eminence and grandeur of this noble peak. I have questioned the Indians as to their meaning for the word Ta-ho-ma. The answer of some showed their ignorance of the meaning. Others, with reticence and suspicion peculiar to the savage mind, were stoically non-committal. One interpretation I have heard given is 'nourishing breasts,' the idea presumably being that the eternal snows of the twin summits have given origin to the streams and have occasioned the glacial deposits that have enriched the valleys, thus nourishing and sustaining vegetable life there just as through the ages the maternal breasts have nourished and sustained the youthful human life."

Sluiskin and Henry, mentioned by Mr. Van Trump, were Klickitats, and spoke the Klickitat language. They were of the same race as the guide of Theodore Winthrop, in 1853, and spoke the same name to Van Trump and General Stevens that Winthrop heard before he first wrote the word "Tacoma." Mr. Van Trump's statement is so clear, forcible and elegantly put that it is most convincing evidence.

Miss Fay Fuller, the first lady to reach the summit of Tacoma, and her father, Edward N. Fuller, Esq., have each made an extended study of the mountain, and they have each adopted the Klickitat word as the real name for the mountain.

SAN J. BAUTISTE (Tabasco.) }
January 19, 1893. }

Mr. James Wickersham, Tacoma, Wash.

MY ESTEEMED SENOR: The contents of your esteemed letter of the 23d of December were of great interest to me, and well deserve that I should devote to it a special amount of time and study. In order, however, that your worship may not wait for my answer, I hasten with pleasure to put

myself to discuss the subject of your letter to put your worship at rest, as far as it is possible for me to do so.

Being simply a question of a geographical name of Indian origin, your worship has certainly devoted to it much study at this moment.

The word Tacoma, to which your worship refers, contains a Nahuatl or old Mexican construction (element), which is very characteristic. It claims our attention by its being met with so far north and so distant from the territory which is occupied actually by the tribes that are descended from the primitive stock; and to speak the truth, this circumstance would, in the last instance (case), be a new proof (confirmation) of the powerful influence that was once exercised by the people through all the territories over which it ruled, all through which it journeyed, during the long itinerary of its perigrinations.

"Therefore, although the word has been much mutilated in the actual living language, I will, according to the present, expose to your worship my own humble opinions as following:

(1.) The vowel "A," in the English idiom in the present case, has a sound which is similar to the "E" in the Spanish and of the Nahuatl, and by consequence the first syllable of the words which I should analyze would be "TE," and the whole word would be "Tecoma."

(2.) This modification established, we obtain a word which has in the Nahuatl idiom the signification "friend at first sight," because as a contraction (apocope) or conjunction of the words "Tecomatl" (Vase of Calabaga, according to Rincon in his work Mexican Art, p. 86, Mex. 1885.)

(3.) Therefore, it is very probable that in the word "Tecoma" there are lacking other letters which, when restored, would contribute to give it an acceptable signification; thus, for example, we could decompose it into "Tecomlan," which means heaps of coal; and of the verb "ma," which means to dig (or raise anything from the earth), which conjugated gives "mar," and contains the transformations "Tacoma," "Tecoma" or "Tecomlan," which, rendered into Spanish, means "the place from which you get coal."

As regards the names "Tacobet" and "Tacoma," which have been given by other tribes to the mountain, I am unable to pronounce a sentence.

I have devoted myself to the study of the indigenous languages of the Southern tribes, so could not undertake to analyze words that derive their origin from the living languages of the North, or from any dead languages that have not been mentioned by other historians.

Here on the spot there are no persons who devote themselves to this kind of investigations to whom I could submit your worship's letter; for this reason I am compelled to expound to your worship with a certain timidity only my own opinions; and I cannot offer the opinions of other persons who are competent in this matter.

If in this letter of mine you should meet with anything useful to you in your important study, I am ready to await further letters from you, unless indeed prevented by insuperable obstacles.

I have the pleasure to send you a copy of my dissertation upon etymological matters; may it please your worship to accept it; while in the

meantime I am occupied with the publication of a second corrected and enlarged edition.

Could you have the kindness to place me in relation with some important philological association or academy.

May it please your worship to accept my respects, etc., etc.

JOSE N. ROVIROSA.

[Translated by Dr. Gundlogson, Feb. 8, 1893.]

INDIAN NOMENCLATURE.

Many of the myths and traditions told by our Nesqually-Puyallup people are worthy of Greek or Norse mythology. Their religious feelings are natural, deep and fervent, and their music, art and mechanical skill, while rude, have many points of excellence. Their language is capable of fine distinctions. They bestowed names on every little lake, point, bay and camping ground; they had particular names for places and prominent points, but no general names. Thus "Puyallup" was the name of the camp ground on the east side of that river below the reservation, but the river had no name; there were as many names for it as they had camping places along its banks. Each of the prominent peaks in both the Cascade and Olympic ranges had names, but neither of the ranges had; they had names for individuals, but not for classes or systems.

The Indian looked with awe and superstition upon the snowy summit of Tacoma. He visited the base, but never ascended above the snow line. The roar of falling waters, the disintegration of its rocky walls, the loud snapping of its glaciers were to him mysterious, solemn and fearful. Each mat home was filled with stories and traditions concerning it—and yet we are told he had no name for it. Walk, as the writer has, through the forest with a bright Indian, and ask him the names of plants, animals, birds and bugs—everything of common life to him—and you will be surprised at the readiness with which the names follow your questions. I was put to shame at my ignorance of botany by my friend, George Leschi, who, as a boy, followed his father in hostile camps, and who cannot now read or write his name. The Indian language is peculiarly rich in nouns—in names. The Indians had a name for the grand mountain we call Tacoma.

What is the name?

Ask the Indians. Thousands of them live yet in sight of its snowy summit, and are the best witnesses of what the name is. I have asked them, and here are their answers:

"MUD BAY, June 7, 1892.

"We, the undersigned, being Indians born near Mount Tacoma, do say: That the mountain was always called by the Nesqually tribe "Tacobet."

EDWARD SMITH, - - - age 26 years.

GEORGE LESCHI, his [X] mark, age 40 years.

CHARLIE WALKER, his [X] mark, age 56 years.

LOUIS YOWALUCH, his [X] mark, age 45 years.

HARRY, his [X] mark, - - age 50 years.

JAMES WALKER, his [X] mark, age 53 years.

JACK SIMMONS, his [X] mark.

"PUYALLUP RESERVATION, Oct. 9, 1892.

"We, the undersigned Indians, belonging to the Puyallup Reservation, do say: That the Nesqually-Puyallup name for Mount Tacoma is "Tacobet." The Klickitat name is "Tahoma." The Indian name for Mount Baker is "Co-ba," of Mount Adams is "Pah-to" and of Mount St. Helens is "Seuck" or "Seuq."

GEORGE LEECHI, his [X] mark, age 40 years.
BILL JAMES, his [X] mark, - age 39 years.
JACK SIMMONS, his [X] mark, - age 39 years.
WILLIAM BOB, his [X] mark, - age 32 years.
BILL PETOWOW, his [X] mark, - age 49 years.
GEORGE WALKER, his [X] mark, age 60 years.
YELM JIM, his [X] mark, - - age 60 years.

October 20, 1892.

"We, being Indians raised near Port Orchard Bay and White River, do say that the Indian name for Mount Tacoma was, ever since we could remember, and always before, called 'Tacobet.' The mountain this side of the great mountain cone is called 'Tc-Wauck.' The Indian name for Mount Baker is 'Coba.' The Olympic mountains are called 'Tu-ad-och Spadit.'

[Signed]: "JACK SIMMONS, his [X] mark, age 39 years."
"THOS. SIMMONS, his [X] mark, age 60 years."

TACOMA, WASH., Jan. 30, 1893.

"James Wickersham, Tacoma, Wash.

DEAR SIR: The common Puyallup Indian name for the great mountain is 'Takoman' or 'Takoban' and also called by the Klickitats 'Tachoma.' It is also sometimes referred to as 'Tuwouk,' the head of the Puyallup River.

Respectfully yours,

P. C. STANUP.

SEATTLE, WASH., Jan. 25, 1893.

"I, Angeline, the daughter of Seattle, do say that the old Indian name for the great mountain at the head of the Nesqually is 'Tacobet,' and that my father, Seattle, always called it by that name.

"ANGELINE, her [X] mark,
"Daughter of Seattle."

"On this 25th day of January, at Seattle, Wash., Angeline, the daughter of Chief Seattle, signed the above paper with her mark, after it was explained to her. She said that God named the mountain Tacobet, and only He could change it.

[Signed]: JACK SIMMONS, his [X] mark.

PUYALLUP RESERVATION, Jan. 30, 1893.

We, the undersigned, who talk the Puyallup-Nesqually language, do

say that the old Indian name for the mountain is "TACOBET," and always was so before the whites came.

MARTHA [X] BILL.	LUCY [X] SIMMONS.
JANIMY [X] BILL.	TEXAS [X] BILL.
COUR [X] SIMMONS.	MARY [X] SITWELL.
MARY [X] SIMMONS.	GEORGE [X] BIRD.
CHARLIE [X] JACKSON.	MRS. [X] SITWELL.
SALLY [X] JACKSON.	BILL [X] MEANNA.
MAJOR [X] HAMILTON.	MRS. [X] MEANNA.
ELLEN [X] HOWARD.	SALLY [X] MEANNA.
JEAN [X] GARRISON.	MRS. [X] OLD JACK.
JAMES [X] RILEY.	CHEHALIS [X] BILL.
BILL [X] JAMES.	BETSY [X] BILL.

ALICE [X] JAMES.

"We, the undersigned, Klickitat and Yakima Indians, now living on the Yakima reservation, say that the old Indian name for Mount Tacoma is, and always was, 'Ta-ho-ma.'

"WILBUR SPENCER.

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

"CHARLES WANNASSAY."

"I certify that the above Indians signed the above paper after thoroughly understanding it.

JAY LYNCH, United States Indian Agent."

[Dated at Fort Simcoe, Wash., January 29, 1893.]

"UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,

"YAKIMA AGENCY.

"FORT SIMCOE, January 29, 1893.)

"Hon. James Wickersham, Tacoma, Wash.

DEAR SIR: According to promise, I send you statement from Indians in regard to Indian name for Mount Tacoma or Rainier.

"I have talked with several old Indians in regard to this matter, and they say that the Indian name for the mountain is, and always was, 'Ta-ho-ma.' Wilbur Spencer, son of old Chief Spencer, and the best interpreter and an educated Indian, says the meaning of the word is a 'rumbling noise or sound.'

"The Indian name for Mount Adams is 'Pat-too,' meaning high, sloping mountain.

"The Indian name for Mount St. Helens is 'Lah-me-lat-clah,' meaning 'fire mountain.'

Very respectfully yours,

"JAY LYNCH, United States Indian Agent."

"We, the undersigned, being Indians who talk the Klickitat-Yakima language, do hereby say that the Klickitat-Yakima name for the great

mountain, at the head of the Nesqually river, is 'Tach-oma,' and that was the old Indian name for the mountain before the white men came to the country.

"GEORGE LESCHI, his [X] mark.
Son of Qalemuth.
"MRS. NAPOLEON, her [X] mark.
Daughter of Leschl.
"WILLIAM CHARLEY.
"MRS. JANNIE CHARLEY.
"BLIND BOB.
"BURNT CHARLEY.
"MRS. BURNT CHARLEY.
"WILLIAM PENIO.
"MRS. NAPOLEON.
Daughter of Chief Kitsap.
"HARRY TAYLOR.
"MRS. LOUISE TAYLOR.
"HENRY TAYLOR.
"PAUL WYNACO.
"MRS. YELM JIM.
"MRS. JAMES RILEY.
"JAMES RILEY."

THE EXACT WORD—"TACOMA."

In August, 1853, Theodore Winthrop journeyed from Port Townsend to Squally in a royal canoe of Clallamdom, paddled by the Duke of York and other aristocratically named retainers. At Nesqually he outfitted for a ride to The Dalles, Ore., via the Natchez pass, and was furnished as a guide a young Klickitat brave, the son of Owhi, whose annual journeys to Squally from Yakima meadows made it a familiar trail to him. Across the flower-carpeted plains from Nesqually rode Winthrop, the poet, and Owhi's son; into the dark recesses of the Puyallup forest, wading the unbridged waters of Skamish, over logs, up Alpine heights—but always in the shadow of the great white mountain, so full of mystery to the guide.

The white man was a poet—sensitive, cultured and refined; the Indian, nature's child, superstitious and imaginative; and as they journeyed into this vast solitude, these poetical natures were drawn into close relationship. From Loolowcan, the Klickitat, the son of Owhi, Winthrop heard the name of "Tachoma," and to the fortunate choice of this guide we are indebted for the exact word Tacoma, as it appears in Winthrop's book, "Entered according to act of Congress in the year 1862," but written nine years previously.

A few quotations from the first author to use the exact word "Tacoma" will be peculiarly appropriate at this time, as they bear directly on the subject under discussion. Concerning his journey from Port Townsend to Squally, he writes, on page 43, "Canoe and Saddle:"

"We had rounded a point, and opened Puyallup Bay, a breadth of sheltered calmness, when I, lifting sleepy eyelids for a dreamy stare about, was suddenly aware of a vast white shadow in the water. What cloud, piled massive on the horizon, could cast an image so sharp in outline, so full of vigorous detail of surface? No cloud, as my stare, no longer dreaming, presently discovered—no cloud, but a cloud compeller.

"It was a giant mountain dome of snow, swelling and seeming to fill the aerial spheres as its image displaced the blue deep of tranquil water. Kingly and alone stood this majesty, without any visible comrade or consort, though far to the north and south its brethren and sisters dominated their realms, each in isolated sovereignty, rising above the pine-darkened sierra of the Cascade mountains, above the stern chasm where the Columbia, Achilles of rivers, sweeps, short-lived and jubilant, to the sea; above

